

# IB Newsletter

## WHAT IS "IB"

Welcome to the first (ever) Minnetonka High School IB Newsletter of the 2015-2016 school year! MHS IB students not only generate the ideas to include in this newsletter but do the legwork. A big thank you to Sydney Maxwell, Sarah Johnson, Elizabeth Schmitz, Annelise Gaston-Carrere, Sydney Moser, and Zoe Vogel for being principled, thinkers, and communicators--so very IB!

For starters, a brief introduction of the International Baccalaureate will be given along with some activities our students have been enjoying and testimonials about the Diploma Programme (DP). Finally, a calendar of the important dates for both seniors and juniors is given so everyone can keep up and attend these events.

INTERNATIONAL  
BACCALAUREATE  
PROGRAMME



## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

The IB is an international nonprofit organization headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland in 1968. In the mid-1960s, a group of teachers from the International School of Geneva founded the IB, which later expanded to Africa, Europe, and America. IB has grown to over 4,200 schools in over 145 countries!

IB stands for International Baccalaureate, which provides student-centered programs for students aged 3 through 19 via three programs: the Primary Years Programme for grades K-5, Middle Years Programme for grades 6-10, and Diploma Program. The DP is a rigorous two year course of study offered to juniors and seniors in high school. In addition to developing intellectual, personal, emotional, and social behaviors, IB programs encourage internationalism. It also allows students to take risks, be caring, and to challenge their skills and also their ways of thinking and debating. Furthermore, it prepares students for university level work, as its rigor helps students to improve their writing and thinking skills. The DP offers students both Higher Level (HL) and Standard Level (SL) courses in Literature, Language Acquisition, Individuals & Societies, Sciences, Math, and The Arts.

Some of the many advantages of IB include its focus on reasoned arguments, its multilingual environment, and the opportunity it provides to study different cultures. Students who complete the DP find that they are ahead of their peers in college in terms of preparation, time management, college credit and/or advanced standing; IB DP grads are also more likely to graduate from college.



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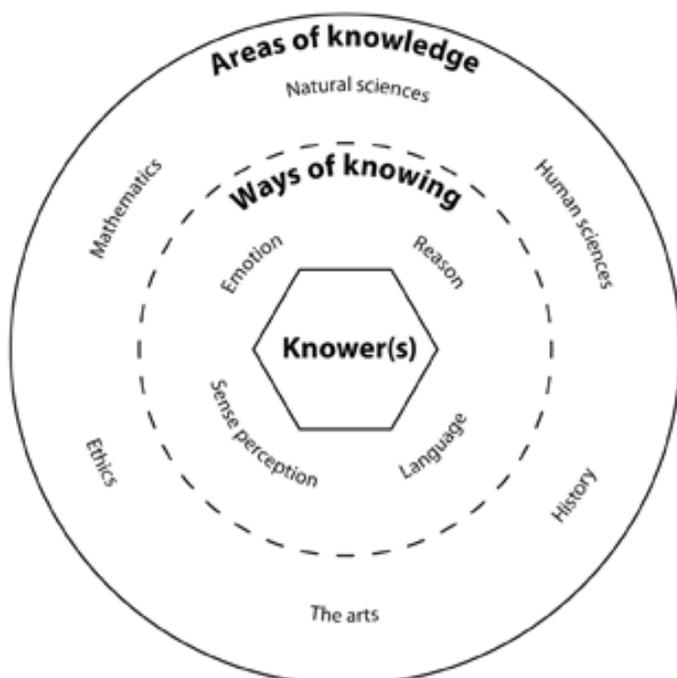
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# WHY SHOULD IB BE IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS?

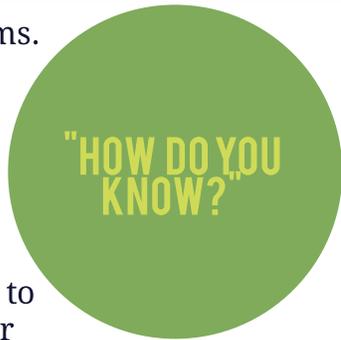
IB is offered in international, private, and public schools throughout the world. Often children and teenagers who move away from their native homes find that the IB DP provides opportunity to achieve a diploma that is accepted almost anywhere in the world; universities in Spain, for instance, do not readily accept a US high school diploma but do recognize an IB Diploma. There are twenty one high schools in Minnesota who offer an IB DP and it is important an program that should be included in more public American schools. It is advantageous because it brings an international impact and influence which is important for schools to provide to help our young people become caring internationally minded individuals working to create a more peaceful world. IB allows schools to offer options for students with different learning styles, while still providing a rigorous curriculum.

## THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

In addition to completing three IB HL and three SL classes, diploma candidates take IB Theory of Knowledge. This class is an opportunity for students to express different opinions about important aspects of life and conflicts, such as laws recently passed or psychological experiences. This class encourages students to think "outside the box" and reach for different arguments and



solutions for societal problems. Class discussions encourage differing opinions and viewpoints and challenge students to think in deeper ways to get answers and always question who, what, when, where, why, how, and to what extent for any debate or topics. In this way, generalisations and stereotyping is avoided. Finally, one of the famous questions in this class that students ask themselves is "how do we know?", which allows students to think deeply and to search for truth and understanding, not just easy answers.



## EXTENDED ESSAY

The Extended essay is a research paper on a specific topic on any class taken over the course of the IB DP's two years. This year's topics were in the subjects of Biology, English or History. Each student was given an advisor to work with and completed much reading and research to support their arguments and learning. The essay is 4,000 words and requires extensive analysis to show the skills gained and acquired in IB. This type of essay prepares students for college as it must be well-thoughtout and requires organization and analysis. Students who complete the EE find that the essays they write in college are far easier than students who do not have this experience while in high school.



# WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO THIS FALL

## EXTENDED ESSAY (EE) RECAP

It seemed daunting, if not outright impossible at first, to consider writing 10 - 15 pages; that is a lot to write about one topic. However, with the help of our wonderful advisors, Maggie Shea, Sonia Labs, Beth Gibbs, Barb Van Pulsum, Kelley Mosiman, Charley Barniskis, Stephanie Nelson, Heather Eyrich, Chet Masteller, Kelly Bunte, Grant Hendrickson, and Cheryl Duncan, we were able to get through the task, and do so successfully.



On October 27, a banquet was held at Minnetonka Community Center to celebrate our accomplishments! Mr. Hendrickson, our much loved year one History HL teacher gave a kind, truthful, touching, and humorous keynote speech. Each Diploma Candidate stood up at the podium to read his or her EE title to the other Diploma Candidates, our advisors, parents, Principal Jeffrey Erickson, Assistant Principal Robb Virgin, Superintendent Dennis Peterson, and school board members in attendance. Each student then gave his or her completed Extended Essay to the advisor, shaking hands, or in most cases, sharing a hug.

It was a wonderfully symbolic activity to signify handing over a completed successful endeavor. Once we handed our EE off, we each felt a sense of relief and pride; speaking for my class, we also shared a collective sense of accomplishment and comradery. We did it!

## FALL RETREAT RECAP

The Junior and Senior classes were blessed with the opportunity to attend a fall retreat on October 2nd to bond with our fellow IB Diploma students and to learn about teamwork. In the morning, we drove to the retreat center, Camp Edenwood, and were greeted by the staff members. We split up into groups to do some smaller group activities, each group comprised of teachers, some juniors, and some seniors. Instead of flocking to our closest friends and not meeting anyone new, we were able to integrate our



classes. Being in small groups facilitated getting to know EVERYONE - not just those to whom we naturally gravitate!

Although each group did different variations of activities, many groups were challenged with raising and lowering a hula hoop, a teamwork game involving running and a rubber chicken, trapping a runaway "moose" (aka a staff member), ordering by birthorder on a single log, and of course, the ropes course. These activities probably seem to evoke a nonsensical goofiness, however, each activity taught us something important. We quickly learned a few things:

1. To stop caring about what we looked like, ignoring the common principle nowadays that if we maintain an attitude of apathy and aloofness, we will seem "cool." We forgot about those things, and participated fully, ignoring our individual insecurities.
2. To have fun by truly engaging in the activities and by sharing laughs with those around us.
3. Most significantly, to work together as a team, no matter if we were in different grades or friend groups. We worked together to accomplish the goal, whatever the activity required. We talked through problems, but also listened to each other.

After the activities, we went inside to create placemats for Meals for Wheels, anonymous cards of gratitude for soldiers, and fabric-tied dog and cat toys for the Humane Society. We combined service for our community with action throughout the day, concluding with mindfulness with Ms. Herbst. By the end of the day, everyone could feel a perceptible difference - we had bonded, we had worked together, and we were, and still are, united! We came back different at 3 pm than we were at 9 that morning, and in a good way. What a day!



# CREATIVITY.ACTION.SERVICE.CAS.

## WHAT IS CAS?

Creativity- art and other experiences that involve creative thinking

Action- physical exertion that contributes to a healthy lifestyle

Service- an unpaid and voluntary exchange, preferably with a learning benefit for the student

As part of the core of the IB curriculum, students engage in at least ten activities that fall into these three categories. It is meant to be a counterbalance to the academic rigor of the program. Students are supported by the wonderful Ms. Mosiman to ensure that this is a fun and developmental aspect of the program.

Oftentimes these activities prove to be an amazing way of bonding both in and outside of school. The fall retreat (pg 4) is one way that the entire group of diploma students was able to 'do CAS' together. New to the IB Program is a CAS project, which is another way that we can come together and support our community.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT  
CURRENT SENIOR  
PROJECTS!

### Pizza for Patients

#### Martina Mazzei

A group of students from our high school travel to the University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital and serve pizza for patients and staff.

It's a great way for Minnetonka students to connect with the community and give back to those in need.



## CAS PROJECT?

A CAS project must incorporate two of the three components. Initiated by the student, it takes place over many weeks, and engages teamwork and collaboration.

We are allowed the freedom to pursue what we would like to do, as long as it meets those criteria. This lets us make a difference for something we're passionate about, while also learning what it means to be in charge of a long term project.

## IB KIDS AGAINST HUNGER

Though not technically a CAS project, IB Kids Against Hunger is student-run, led fearlessly by Martina Mazzei and Nina Wagner. At 8:00 pm on every first Friday of the month, we meet at Feed My Starving Children, where we pack boxes of food to send all over the world. Join us!

### America's Tooth Fairy

#### Myrto Neamonitaki

Through America's Tooth Fairy, Myrto will be working with the Folwell School, teaching the students about teeth and food in fun ways, like games and songs. She will then provide the dental products she has collected through donations.



### Random Fandom

#### Vanessa Orcutt

Have you ever felt like your team just isn't getting the support it needs? Do you need more fans at your events? Just call Random Fandom! Every month they'll choose activities to attend and support, bolstering school spirit and pride.



### Miracle League

#### Kayla McGovern



Kayla is a board member for Miracle League, foundation that creates athletic activities for kids from 3-19 with cognitive and physical disabilities. She volunteers on top of creating and organizing events!

# WHY IS IB IMPORTANT?

## Grant Hendrickson

Grant Hendrickson is a teacher here at Minnetonka High School and one of his classes is IB History HL. In his opinion, IB is a good program that challenges students to become better critical thinkers. In IB there are fewer topics, which allows studies to be more in depth. IB also requires more writing. It is good to have IB classes because it is always a good thing to have varied options in schools that offer different kinds of courses for students who have various ways of studying. Finally IB is very important for critical thinking and analysis as well as looking at things from different perspectives.



## Claire White

Claire White is a senior at Minnetonka High School, who takes both IB and non-IB classes so is not a full diploma candidate. She takes IB Literature & Performance SL, Math Studies SL, and History HL. Claire likes the structure of IB classes, tests, and essays. In IB students don't have to memorize as much, and have more opportunities to discuss various topics. Finally, Claire strongly agrees that it is important for IB to be integrated in American schools because it helps students to be more open-minded, giving students lifelong learning skills.



## Molli Walsleben

Molli is a Junior who started the first year of the IB Dipoma Programme this fall. For Molli, IB seemed like a good option for her because it offered a lot of different things, like TOK and the EE, but she also liked the idea of improving in 6 different subjects at different levels. She says IB is important because it allows for an international way of thinking, and it also develops new skills. She loves the idea of CAS, which for her adds a important balance to ordinary class work, and which helps students become well-rounded individuals.



"IN A WORLD WHERE BEING INTERNATIONAL IS IMPORTANT, IB COULD NOT BE MORE USEFUL"

## Kelley Mosiman

Kelley Mosiman teaches HL Literature and other upperclassmen English classes. She is also the CAS coordinator. In her opinion, IB is the best way to prepare students for outside studies and also encourages students to take risks and trust themselves in doing things they would never think they would do. IB also gives a different perspective on the world. Finally, CAS is an important aspect in IB because it shows that it is not just about academics but also about human activity, and the understanding of why they are doing what they are doing.





# STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

## ROBERT SADLER

### [Favorite IB class?](#)

ToK. It is just a completely unique class, different from anything I've ever taken. It was a good opportunity to talk about your opinions instead of just listening to what other people tell you.

### [Reasons you chose the IB Diploma Programme?](#)

Primarily, it was to improve my essay writing. I also liked IB's discursive nature, rather than just memorizing facts.

### [Activities outside of school?](#)

I am a captain of both the Minnetonka HS Alpine Ski team and a club ski team, and I also participate in a rugby club. To manage my time, I prioritize my work and evaluate how long work will take me so I don't get surprised by a huge project the day before it is due.



### [One aspect of growth found in IB?](#)

The EE forced me to schedule time and give myself deadlines to decide how it worked best for me. It was completely individual, which helped me learn how to work on something when it wasn't part of an allotted time in a classroom.

### [Piece of advice for current or prospective IB students?](#)

Two things stick out in my mind: even if you're incredibly busy during the week, make sure you get a full night's rest from Sunday night to Monday morning to set a positive tone for the rest of the week. Second, communicate with your teachers as much as possible, because they only know as much as you tell them.



## AILI HUSS

### [Favorite IB class?](#)

Theory of Knowledge. It makes you think about and question everything you've known in a different way than you ever have.

### [Reasons you chose the IB Diploma Programme?](#)

I liked the writing aspect of it.

### [Activities outside of school?](#)

I have done backpack tutoring, TLC, and swimming. They help me break up my schoolwork: because of after-school practices, I usually start my homework at 8, and because I have less time to work than what is normally permitted for homework, I have to work hard to get stuff done as quickly as possible.

### [One aspect of growth found in IB?](#)

Definitely the IA's or the EE. They both have me come up with my own ideas and keep me responsible for every part of it.

### [Piece of advice for current or prospective IB students?](#)

Get close to people and grow into friendships, because then you have a means of support, and they'll help you so much. And, don't be afraid to ask for help, because everyone is willing to help you.

## PATRICK BRADY

### [Favorite IB class?](#)

HL Math - there is a huge range and depth of the material we cover. In Year 1, it also let me take both AP Statistics and AP Calculus Tests, and I felt really prepared for both because of my teachers, Mr. Frie and Dr. Sauer.

### [Reasons you chose the IB Diploma Programme?](#)

It just sounded really interesting, and I wanted to try something new for my

junior classes. I also wanted a challenging, yet doable workload for my junior year and I heard from current students that the Diploma was like that.

### [Activities outside of school?](#)

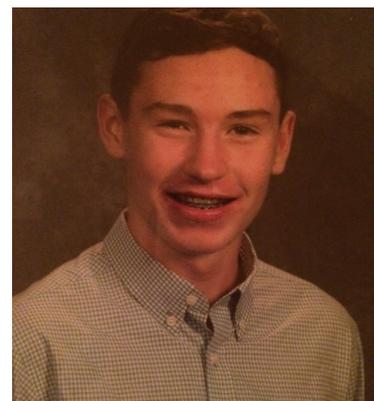
I have cross country and track year-round, about 2 hours per day, and I have a summer job, play the guitar, work at the Writing Center, and have Boy Scouts. I've found this to be a good balance for me and thankfully I have not needed to drop any of my activities. When I don't have enough time, I prioritize the work that I have, and find a way to fit it all in. For me, running is a great stress reliever because I can take my mind off the work and it gives me something to look forward to each day.

### [One aspect of growth found in IB?](#)

HL Lit, the Language Arts course for IB DP students. It has helped me become a more creative, flexible thinker. For instance, I was used to a more rigid, concrete assignments like the 5-paragraph essay, but the IB assessments are much more open and focused on my ideas and demonstrating what I learned than having a certain format, structure, or thesis.

### [Piece of advice for current or prospective IB students?](#)

Do your homework as soon as you can, because although there is flexibility when to work, but not as much when it's due. Also, find some activity or club that you love to do, because it helps you meet lots of people, takes the stress of your workload, and makes your high school experience truly enjoyable.



## Dedicated new web page for parents

IB has created a **new page** dedicated to helping parents understand, and make the most of, the programmes offered in partnership with IB World Schools –you will find information and FAQs about the four programmes, plus recommended resources, research, advice on how to get transcripts, how to help students prepared for the move to higher education, and much more.

## MHS IB Website

Coming soon! Be on the lookout for a revamped webpage specific to IB at MHS, highlighting relevant IB information, videos, and other resources. It's headed your way in early 2016.

# WHAT MHS ALUMNI ARE SAYING ABOUT IB

Choosing IB was one of the best decisions i have ever made. IB prepared me so well for college. I had a very successful first year in college, and I owe much of that to the incredible preparation IB provided me. -Leah, 2014

It really was a life changing experience for me, and I can't see myself being the same way without it. -Madeline, 2012

The IB program and IB teachers have completely prepared me for courses at UW Madison- everyone should go IB - Erin, 2015

## OUR WRITERS AND THEIR QUIRKS



### SYDNEY MAXWELL

The only IB Junior working on the IB Newsletter team



### SARAH JOHNSON

The only IB senior to have visual arts for her elective credit



### ELIZABETH SCHMITZ

The only IB senior in IB music. Also the only person in IB Music.



### ZOE VOGEL

The only IB diploma candidate to also be participating in Vantage



### ANNELYSE GASTON-CARRERE

The only IB diploma candidate to take an IB class outside the United States



## QUESTIONS ABOUT IB?

If you have any questions about IB classes, diploma requirements, IB activities, or just want to hear about the diploma from a student perspective please contact the writers of this newsletter at [ibmtkaquestions@gmail.com](mailto:ibmtkaquestions@gmail.com). We would love to hear from you !!



# CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

## DECEMBER 16TH

Seniors have their first discussion with Ms. Duncan regarding their Theory of Knowledge Essays.

## DECEMBER 14TH

Seniors start their individual oral commentaries (IOC) and literary discussions in English. This consists of a 10 minute commentary followed by a 10 minute discussion of either *An American Childhood* by Annie Dillard or *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller

### December 2015

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1 Group 4 Project Day	2	3	4 Feed My Starving Children 8-9:30pm
7	8	9	10	11
	Group 4 Project Presentations	Math HL MOA Calculus Trip		
14	15	16	17	18
Literature HL IOC	Literature HL IOC 5pm Pizza for Patients	Literature HL IOC	Literature HL IOC	Literature HL IOC
21	22	23	24	25
French HL IOC 1/2day	French HL IOC	Math Studies IA Rough Draft Due	No School - Winter Vacation	No School - Winter Vacation
28	29	30	31	1
No School - Winter Vacation	No School - Winter Vacation	No School - Winter Vacation	No School - Winter Vacation	No School - Winter Vacation

### January 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			31	1
			No School - Winter Vacation	No School - Winter Vacation
4	5	6	7	8
		Lang & Lit SL IOC	Lang & Lit SL IOC	Lang & Lit SL IOC Feed My Starving Children 8-9:30pm
11	12	13	14	15
Lit & Perf Performances Lang & Lit SL IOC TOK Essay Draft Due Math Studies IA Due	Lit & Perf Performances Lang & Lit SL IOC	Lit & Perf Performances Lang & Lit SL IOC SEHS IA #1 DUE	Lit & Perf Performances Lang & Lit SL IOC	Lit & Perf Performances Lang & Lit SL IOC
18	19	20	21	22
No School - MLK Day				
25	26	27	28	29
No School - Staff Dev/Grading	Lit & Performance IOC 2nd Semester	Lit & Performance IOC	Lit & Performance IOC	Spanish HL IOC